

**LODI CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2018**

A. Roll call

The Special City Council Town Hall meeting of October 8, 2018, was called to order by Mayor Nakanishi at 6:02 p.m.

Present: Council Member Chandler, and Mayor Nakanishi

Absent: Council Member Johnson, Council Member Kuehne, and Mayor Pro Tempore Mounce

Also Present: City Manager Schwabauer, City Attorney Magdich, and City Clerk Ferraiolo

B. Topic

B-1 Presentations Regarding Efforts to Address Homelessness in Lodi

Mayor Nakanishi welcomed the public to the second Town Hall meeting to discuss efforts to address homelessness in Lodi and introduced the following individuals: Mark Armstrong with Take Back Lodi, John Ledbetter with the Committee on Homelessness, Adam Cheshire with the San Joaquin County Continuum of Care (CoC), and San Joaquin County Board of Supervisor Chuck Winn.

City Manager Schwabauer provided information on the challenges in addressing homelessness, as well as what the City has done, is currently doing, and what it will do going forward. Specific topics of discussion included California public policy choices relating to mental hospital and jail closures and AB109 realignment that decriminalized drug addiction without adding housing solutions; high-cost housing in California with no affordable housing solutions; new grant dollars for counties to address emergency housing needs that come with conditions or restrictions; Housing First model that provides housing as a priority over getting clean from addiction; City's investment in housing, including the low-income senior unit downtown, Crane's Landing, Lodi House, Salvation Army, and Hope Harbor; City's shopping cart ordinance and one full-time and one part-time Community Liaison Officer dedicated to the homeless situation; impact on Police Department with increased calls, resulting in the creation of a Special Enforcement Team (SET) to specifically handle homeless-related Police calls; loitering on public property and vagrancy protected by the First Amendment, making it difficult to cite certain behaviors; 9th Circuit Court decisions regarding sleeping outdoors, making it impossible for jurisdictions to prosecute homeless individuals sitting, lying, or sleeping outdoors; posting requirements when cleaning up homeless camps; creation of the Committee on Homelessness, which is the model for San Joaquin County; discontinuation of feeding in parks with concentrated resources centralized at the Salvation Army; great response from Take Back Lodi, helping to keep streets clean; funding of the Ready to Work program; potential grant application for money coming in through CoC to create housing for individuals who graduate from a structured program and are ready for housing; and adoption of the shelter crisis designation in Lodi. He summarized that the City will continue to work with the County and its many partners to address the situation.

John Ledbetter, representing the Community on Homelessness, provided information on the creation of the Committee, Council's adoption of the Committee's finding and ideas, and the Committee's goal to assist homeless individuals and families to secure housing, employment, and services so they become healthy, productive members of the community. Specific topics of discussion included, partnership with City staff, Council, and San Joaquin County; Grand Jury's assessment of Lodi serving as the model program within the County; development of brochures listing agencies that assist the homeless; working with faith-based community to better help the homeless by ceasing park feedings and providing meals at the Salvation Army; working with Grace and Mercy Charitable Foundation to become a homeless day center; partnering with the

Ready to Work Program and Take Back Lodi; providing job training through ABC Norcal and seeking funding to continue the program; raising funds through the Lodi Police Foundation to pay for the Community Liaison Officer vehicle; Lodi Police Department's prioritization of funds to create the Community Liaison Officer position and to date over 80 homeless individuals reunited with families or taken into programs; working with San Joaquin County and the San Joaquin Homeless Task Force to create the CoC; working on the next point-in-time count for January 2019, which will be the determining factor in how much grant funding the City receives; looking for 80-100 volunteers to assist with the point-in-time count; working with the San Joaquin County Housing Authority to apply for grant funding for Homeless Emergency Assistance Program (HEAP) funds; and developing new partnerships where it can and continuing to work with existing partners to deliver services to the homeless community. Further, he commented there are two critical elements missing in this effort besides the shortage of affordable housing: 1) local detox center for substance abusers and 2) beds for the mentally ill. He encouraged citizens to communicate this to their legislators.

Mark Armstrong with Take Back Lodi provided background on the creation of the group and its goal to make Lodi a better place to live with its primary focus on addressing homelessness. Mr. Armstrong listed the many property cleanups, including the Awani River and beach area; the trestle on Turner Road and Stockton Street; behind Guild Winery and the casino; Lodi Avenue, Lawrence Park, Victor Road, Highway 99 and the Mokelumne River; and behind Rocha's Mortuary, CVS, and south of Wal-Mart. Specific topics of discussion included posting requirements when cleaning up homeless camps; shopping cart removal by Take Back Lodi members; network for spotting issues and crime and dealing with them quickly; development of positive relationship with Caltrans and its assistance in cleaning up Highway 99; relocation of the Lodi Police K-9 training facility from behind the Armory to Lawrence Park, which was funded through Take Back Lodi; plans to improve the American Legion parking lot; use of the Ready to Work Program; suggestion that vagrancy and loitering laws be enforced when it involves trespassing on private property, drug activity, theft, and destruction of property; and request that the City enforce its shopping cart and tent laws, install larger signs in parks, and encourage businesses and residents to clean up around their properties. He thanked Take Back Lodi members for all they have done, adding he left flyers on its fundraising efforts to improve Lawrence Park.

Adam Cheshire with the San Joaquin County CoC provided background on what the CoC is, what it does, where it is going, and the funding of his position through San Joaquin County. Specific topics of discussion included various funding sources for providing homeless services and shelter; available emergency shelters, including Hope Harbor, and the need for more options; inability to solve the homeless issue quickly and the need to collaborate by providing funds or land; the Department of Housing and Urban Development working with CoC on priorities and funding; make-up of the CoC to include representatives from all over the County, including Lodi; past and continued application efforts for all possible grant and funding opportunities to cover a wide-range of issues; and working on the point-in-time homeless count, which will be done every year, and the hope that more community involvement and use of volunteers will get a more accurate count.

San Joaquin County Supervisor Chuck Winn commended Council, Take Back Lodi, the Committee on Homelessness, and CoC for their hard work and collaborative efforts and being a role model program for others throughout the country to emulate. He stressed that multi-agency projects are much more likely to receive funding than single agencies trying on their own. Specific topics of discussion included Take Back Lodi and its efforts to clean-up Lodi; County resources to work with cities to address some of the problems associated with homelessness; lack of affordable housing and how California got into this position; less expensive and more efficient temporary shelter alternatives, such as tiny houses and 3D printing; mental health issues; beautification programs to plant trees in addition to eliminating graffiti, litter, and weeds; collaborative efforts; and continuing and expanding Take Back Lodi's program model throughout the County.

Marika Paternostro, member of the public and business owner, expressed her concern with the increase in homelessness in and around her store, particularly the harassing behavior toward her

customers, theft, trash, and litter, all of which are frightening away her customers. Both Police Chief Patterson and Mr. Armstrong stated they would meet with her to see what can be done at her store location.

Melissa Berg, member of the public, posed questions regarding HEAP funding, including how much the City could receive and what Lodi's application would include. Mr. Cheshire responded that the allocation is countywide and will depend on the applications submitted by the community. Mr. Schwabauer stated the HEAP application from Lodi would likely be a six- to eight-unit temporary housing project for individuals graduating from an existing program to free up shelter space. Following additional questions and suggestions, Mr. Schwabauer encouraged Ms. Berg to join the Lodi Committee on Homelessness.

Susan Oesterman, member of the public, stated that efforts need to be focused on those without mental health or drug and alcohol problems because, in her experience, affordable housing efforts are not successful for people who do not work or are incapable of taking care of themselves due to their addictions. She agreed there is a need for mental health and detox facilities and pointed out the City may be open to liability if it allows homeless individuals to sleep in parks and on streets and someone is injured. She suggested the City enact an ordinance requiring recycling centers to only recycle materials from those who can prove they live in Lodi by showing identification or a utility bill. In response to Ms. Oesterman, Mr. Schwabauer stated the City has provided funds, primarily from the Community Development Block Grant, to Hotel Lodi, Lodi House, Cranes Landing, Hope Harbor, and the Community Liaison Officer, adding that HEAP funding would be a new funding source for the City.

Nancy Brakensiek, member of the public and criminal justice professor, spoke of the broken window theory and how something neglected can become a target for crime, which may explain the increase in the number of homeless individuals. She suggested Lodi focus on taking care of the smaller problems and maintaining order, which may help reduce the major crimes. Lodi needs to prioritize its efforts to ensure Lodi does not become a magnet for new homeless individuals.

Police Chief Tod Patterson provided background on the Department's response to the homeless. Specific topics of discussion included increase in number of calls, particularly in the morning when business owners arrive at their shops; limitations on what the Police Department can do; efforts of Take Back Lodi, Pat Frehling, and Ryan Holz and Richard Dunfee who have both served in the Community Liaison Officer position and helped close to 100 people get connected to services or family members; homeless services and programs that draw homeless into the community; enforcement issues and increase in citations from 122 in 2015 to 347 this year to date; shopping cart removal and clean ups of abandoned homeless camps; use of resources and donations; and increase in transient-related calls from 1,630 in 2015 to 2,300 this year to date.

Richard Dunfee, Community Liaison Officer, provided background information on what a typical day is like for him and stated he understands the public's frustration. Specific topics of discussion included getting service and program assistance to homeless individuals in need; proactive enforcement; concentrated efforts on specific homeless individuals through collaborative efforts; restrictions foisted on law enforcement from various legislative actions; problem areas in town, including Lawrence Park and now the Softball Complex; partnerships with Take Back Lodi, Lodi Committee on Homelessness, Lodi Memorial Hospital, Grace and Mercy, and Project Breakthrough; enforcement through SET; and reminder to public to call the Lodi Police Department if someone is causing problems.

An unidentified individual indicating he was the general manager of the downtown movie theater stated he has called the Lodi Police Department on a number of occasions but no one responded. He stated he feels the burden is on the resident or business owner to handle these matters, even though they are not trained to do so.

Mayor Nakanishi read an e-mail (filed) from Sheri Didreckson, owner of Sheri's Sonshine Nutrition Center, regarding her experiences in dealing with the increase in homelessness.

Pastor David Hill, president of Project Breakthrough, expressed appreciation for all that has been

done and for the suggestions going forward, as well as for the collaborative efforts to date. He acknowledged that many of the homeless can be disruptive but reminded that every human being has a right to live. He commented on the efforts to address feedings in the parks and the church's efforts in working with schools, the Lodi Police Department, and other groups. He expressed hope that Measure L passes so more resources can go to the Police Department.

J. Casey, member of the public, stated he believes there is a difference between homeless individuals and transients and that Lodi should stop being a magnet that attracts transients.

Mike Lusk, member of the public, expressed support for Measure L and encouraged the public to support it because the City does not have extra funds to solve the problems the public is asking it to resolve. Measure L would put more officers on the streets and create a greater police presence in the City to handle these types of calls.

Troy Wagers, member of the public, stated he lives near the river and shared his experiences with the homeless and transients living near there, including litter, drug use, fires, and theft. He has worked with a number of groups, including Take Back Lodi, Dave Vaccarezza with California Waste, and nearby wineries, to continually fight to keep the area clean and safe. He stated he believes there is minimal enforcement taking place and that everyone should stop worrying about how much money should be spent on the problem and, instead, come up with solutions.

C. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Ferraiolo  
City Clerk